



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Snapper Grouper Amendment 61

Evaluation of the Fishery Management Unit

March 2026

Background

Amendment 61 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Amendment 61) seeks to evaluate species managed under the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit (FMU) to better align the FMU with management obligations and mandates required under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). This amendment will potentially remove species from the FMU or designate appropriate species as ecosystem component (EC) species where full federal management measures are not necessary. This amendment is intended to reduce regulatory burden and free up capacity to dedicate to other species that need federal conservation and management. Through this amendment, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will determine which species will:

- Remain regulated under full federal management measures where appropriate (e.g., annual catch limits (ACLs), accountability measures (AMs), or size limits),
- Be removed from the FMU and no longer be subject to federal measures, or
- Be designated as EC species, which would allow some federal measures to remain in place such as a permit and reporting requirements but there would be no management measures (e.g., no ACLs or AMs).

In December 2024, the Council requested information to begin evaluating the need for federal conservation and management of species in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit (FMU). Since then, the Council has identified 17 species to examine more in-depth to determine whether the species should be removed from the FMU or designated as EC species.

In June 2025, the Council reviewed information that included federal guidelines to facilitate a discussion of whether the 17 selected species continue to need federal conservation and management, noting the following:

- The Council concluded that all 17 species should be considered for either designation as EC species or removal from the FMU through an amendment.
- Several Council members noted that they do not want most of the species to be completely unregulated but also recognized that the need for conservation and management may not rise to the same level as other species in the FMU.
- Council members also noted that some state-level regulations for these species, particularly in North Carolina and South Carolina, are currently dependent on federal regulations.

At the September 2025 meeting, the Council reviewed Amendment 61, refined the potential measures, and approved the amendment for scoping which occurred in the fall of 2025. The Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) also reviewed Amendment 61 at their October 2025 meeting and the Law Enforcement AP reviewed the amendment at their January 2026 meeting.

Summary of last meeting (December 2025)

[December 2025 Snapper Grouper Committee Report](#)

[December 2025 AM 61 Decision Document](#)

At the December 2025 meeting, the Council reviewed scoping comments, draft ecosystem management objectives for EC species, and measures considered in the amendment along with associated comments from the Snapper Grouper AP. In doing so, the Snapper Grouper Committee provided the following guidance:

- The draft ecosystem management objectives are acceptable as presented.
- It was noted that a report on commercial landings for unmanaged and EC species in the South Atlantic Region is being developed and will be provided to the Council at a meeting in the latter half of 2026 and annually thereafter.
- In discussion of the species and potential measures that will be further considered in the amendment, it was noted that additional information was needed. As such, the Committee requested specific information be brought to the March 2026 meeting:
 - A presentation on how the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) has designated EC species and implemented associated measures.
 - Also consider how other councils have designated EC species in their FMPs and associated measures.
 - Further examine past SAFMC actions regarding EC species and removal of species from the FMU in the SG FMP.
 - Request information from the SEFSC on what a simplified approach to assessing species considered in AM 61 would entail, including the timeline and staff capacity to carry out these assessments.
 - Provide additional information on the path for designating EC species.

Objectives for this meeting (March 2026)

- Review Law Enforcement AP comments and requested information from the December 2025 meeting.

- Provide feedback on:
 - Draft purpose and need statements.
 - Species to continue to consider in Amendment 61.
 - Measures that should be further considered in Amendment 61.
 - Whether or not the amendment should move forward.

Draft Purpose and Need Statements

The **purpose** of Amendment 61 is to evaluate species that comprise the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit to better align with obligations and mandates required by the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

The **need** is to support Executive Order 14276 by prioritizing efficient regulations for species in need of federal conservation and management.

COMMITTEE ACTION

- Discuss the draft purpose and need statements, including whether the statements are reflective of the Council’s intent for this amendment.

Information on EC species

Per the National Standard (NS) Guidelines ([50 C.F.R §600 Subpart-D](#)), Councils have the option to establish EC species within a federal FMP if they determine that the species do not require conservation and management, but should be listed in a federal FMP in order to achieve ecosystem management objectives. In such a case, the NS Guidelines provide some guidance on factors that a Council should consider when determining whether species need federal conservation and management as well as when a species can be considered an EC species. The following descriptions provide information on the definition of EC species and how EC species may be considered for addition to a federal FMP.

What are EC species?

EC species are defined as “*stocks that a Council or the Secretary has determined do not require conservation and management, but desire to list in an FMP in order to achieve ecosystem management objectives*” ([50 C.F.R §600.305\(d\)\(13\)](#)).

How can a Council designate species as EC species?

Under NS General guidelines, “*Councils may choose to identify stocks within their FMPs as ecosystem component (EC) species...if a Council determines that the stocks do not require conservation and management based on the considerations and factors in paragraph (c)(1) of this section (see Appendix 1). EC species may be identified at the species or stock level, and may be grouped into complexes. Consistent with National Standard 9¹, MSA section*

¹ National Standard 9 covers bycatch.

303(b)(12)², and other applicable MSA sections, management measures can be adopted in order to, for example, collect data on the EC species, minimize bycatch or bycatch mortality of EC species, protect the associated role of EC species in the ecosystem, and/or to address other ecosystem issues” (50 C.F.R §600.305(c)(5)).

Path for designating EC species

Given the guidance provided in the NS Guidelines, the Council would work through the ten factors listed in Appendix 1 to determine the need for conservation and management for each species that is being considered in this amendment. Upon doing so, the species that do not fit the need for federal conservation and management would be candidates for EC species designation. The Council already began this process at the June 2025 meeting, when the Snapper Grouper Committee began to develop rationale for considering changes to the number of species in managed under the Snapper Grouper FMP using [a survey](#) via Google Forms that considers information to address each of the ten criteria. Upon completion of this amendment and review process, the species designated by the Council would then become EC species once the final rule for the amendment becomes effective.

Information on actions of other Councils regarding EC species

Several councils, including the South Atlantic, have taken action to include EC species in their FMPs. Many councils have often considered EC species designations in the context of protecting forage species, but as previously noted, species may also be considered EC species for other reasons. The following examples outline some general measures that have been taken for EC species:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

In 2017, the MAFMC implemented an [Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment](#) that designated 16 species or species groups as EC species. The amendment established a possession limit for all EC species combined, along with permit, transit, and reporting provisions. The following specific measures were implemented³:

- **Aggregate possession limit:** A 1,700-pound possession limit for all EC species combined.
- **Permit requirement:** Requires that all commercial vessels and operators that catch and/or possess EC species be issued a commercial vessel and operator permit from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).
- **Transit provisions:** Allows commercial vessels to transit the Mid-Atlantic Forage Species Management Unit with an amount of EC species onboard that exceeds the possession limit and to land in a port outside of the management unit provided that the fish were harvested outside of the management unit and that all gear is stowed and not available for immediate use while transiting.
- **Record keeping and reporting:** Requires vessel operators and seafood dealers to report the catch and sale of EC species on existing vessel trip reports and dealer reports.

² From MSA 303(b)(12) when discussing discretionary provisions of an FMP: “include management measures in the plan to conserve target and non-target species and habitats, considering the variety of ecological factors affecting fishery populations.”

³ As outlined on the MAFMC’s website at: <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/unmanaged-forage>

Purpose statements

- To advance an ecosystem approach to fisheries management in the Mid-Atlantic through the consideration of management alternatives that would afford protection to currently unmanaged forage species by regulating landings and/or possession of those species.
- Consider management alternatives to address data collection and reporting of landings of currently unmanaged forage species.
- Consider measures to establish a process for new fisheries for currently unmanaged forage species to develop or existing fisheries to expand.

Need statement

- To prohibit the development of new and expansion of existing directed commercial fisheries on unmanaged forage species in Mid-Atlantic Federal waters until the Council has had an adequate opportunity to assess the scientific information relating to any new or expanded directed fisheries and consider potential impacts to existing fisheries, fishing communities, and the marine ecosystem.

Milestones and timeline for development:

- Forage Fish Workshop: April 2013
- Forage Fish Whitepaper: November 2014
- Initiation: December 2014.
- Scoping: Scoping meetings were held across several states (from Rhode Island to North Carolina) in September and October 2015.
- Public Hearings: Public hearings held in May and June 2016.
- Final Action: The Council approved the amendment in August 2016.
- Implementation: NMFS partially approved and implemented the amendment with a [final rule](#) effective on September 27, 2017.
 - Bullet and Frigate Mackerel were disapproved for inclusion in the amendment due to stated concerns over best scientific information available (NS 2), whether the species are caught as bycatch or will be subject to commercial exploitation, and that the species do not meet all of the factors outlined in the NS guidelines since there was evidence presented that the species are caught for sale or personal use.
 - Later added as EC species in the Dolphin Wahoo FMP through [Amendment 12](#).

Pacific Fishery Management Council

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) developed a [Comprehensive Ecosystem-Base Amendment 1 \(CEBA 1\)](#), effective May 2016, that “*prohibits the development of new directed fisheries on forage species that are not currently managed by the Council (PFMC), or the States, until the Council (PFMC) has had an adequate opportunity to assess the science relating to any proposed fishery and any potential impacts to our existing fisheries and communities*”. General measures included:

- Retention limit: A prohibition on landing EC species without any other species onboard.
- Trip limit: A vessel trip limit of 10 metric tons combined weight of all EC species onboard.
- Annual limit: An annual vessel limit of 30 metric tons combined weight of all EC species in a calendar year.
- Processing limitation: A prohibition, with limited exceptions, of at-sea processing of EC species.

Trawl gear-specific measures:

- **Trip limit:** A vessel trip limit of 1 metric ton combined weight of all EC species onboard, with the exception of EC squid species.
- **Annual limit:** An annual vessel limit of 40 metric tons combined weight of any EC squid species in a calendar year.

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) classified squids as EC species through amendments to their Bering Sea Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Groundfish and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Groundfish FMPs in 2018. The NPFMC noted that “*squid are important prey species for marine mammals, fish, and other squid*” and “*although squid do not require conservation and management, it is still appropriate to take measures to minimize squid bycatch to the extent practicable.*”

In addition to classifying squids as EC species, the two amendments prohibited directed fishing for squids in the BSAI or GOA groundfish fisheries, maintained record keeping and reporting requirements to record and report catches of squids, and specified retention limits for squids. Specific measures were as follows⁴:

- **Record keeping and reporting:** catch, discard, and production of squid must be recorded in logbooks or on catch or production reports.
- **Retention limit:** the maximum retainable amount of squid is not to exceed 20 percent of the total landings retained.

Information on Council actions regarding EC species and species removal in the Snapper Grouper FMP

The Council has altered the composition of the Snapper Grouper FMU several times by removing species from the FMP or designating species as ECs through [Amendment 25 \(Comprehensive ACL Amendment\)](#), [Amendment 27](#), and [Amendment 35](#) to the Snapper Grouper FMP. The following summarizes these Council actions:

Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment (Amendment 25)(2012)

- **Council Action:** Removed 13 species from the FMP (French grunt, bluestriped grunt, spanish grunt, sheepshead, yellow jack, crevalle jack, grass porgy, black margate, porkfish, puddingwife, queen triggerfish, tiger grouper, and smallmouth grouper).
- **Decision Criteria:**
 - Species with 95% or greater landings from state waters,
 - Species covered under the Florida Marine Life Species Rule, and
 - Species with no landings.
- **Council Action:** Designated six EC species: bank sea bass, cottonwick, longspine porgy, ocean triggerfish, rock sea bass, and schoolmaster.

⁴ As outlined in Federal Register implementing BSAI Groundfish Amendment 117 and GOA Groundfish Amendment 106: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/07/06/2018-14457/fisheries-of-the-exclusive-economic-zone-off-alaska-reclassifying-squid-species-in-the-bsai-and-go>

- The Council had considered removing these species from the FMP but changed course after receiving comments from the public in support of designating some species as ECs instead of removing them.
- **Decision Criteria:** When considering which species would qualify as EC species, the Council considered various landings categories (less than or equal to 1,000, 2,500, 5,000, or 10,000 lbs) and species that met NS 1 criteria for EC species at the time.
 - Selected species that met three of the four NS 1 criteria for EC species.
 - The designation of these EC species retained them in the Snapper Grouper FMP, but they were not required to have an ACL or AM.
 - These EC species were also not subject to any other management actions within the Comprehensive ACL Amendment and were not subject to other Federal management measures such as recreational bag limits and size limits.
 - Where those types of management measures were already in place, this final rule removed those applicable Federal regulations.

Amendment 27 (2014)

- **Council Action:** Removed blue runner from the Snapper Grouper FMP.
- **Decision Criteria:** The Council noted that the majority of landings of blue runner (99%) were in waters off Florida and adequate management was already in place in Florida state waters.
 - The Council considered alternatives that would:
 - Keep blue runner in the FMP,
 - Remove blue runner from the FMP (Council Preferred),
 - Retain blue runner in the FMP but allow commercial harvest and sale of blue runner for vessels associated with a commercial Spanish Mackerel or commercial Snapper Grouper permit, and
 - Retain blue runner in the FMP but exempt it from the Snapper Grouper permit requirement for purchase, harvest, and sale.

Amendment 35 (2016)

- **Council Action:** Removed black snapper, dog snapper, mahogany snapper, and schoolmaster (an EC species) from the Snapper Grouper FMP.
- **Decision Criteria:** Harvest of the four species was very low from federal waters and in state waters other than Florida. Also noted that species could be or already were adequately managed by the state of Florida.
 - The stated objective of this action was to create a consistent regulatory environment for the subject species and ensure that only species requiring federal management are included in the Snapper Grouper FMP.

Species being considered in Amendment 61

The species that the Council has selected for further evaluation on whether there is a continued need for conservation and management are listed with their sector ACLs in Table 1. Species that are part of a complex are listed with their complex sector ACLs as well. Species in each complex that are not being considered for further evaluation are shaded in gray and provided for context. Complexes are managed under a single, collective ACL for all species in the complex. Commercial and recreational ACLs for individual species within complexes are shown in

italics. Figure 1 is included to help visualize the proportion of a complex ACL that is accounted for by each species in Table 1.

Table 1. Sector and total ACLs for Snapper Grouper species selected by the Council for further evaluation of the need for conservation and management*.

Complex/Species	Com ACL (lbs ww)	Rec ACL (CHTS lbs ww)	Total ACL (lbs ww)	Percent of Total Complex ACL
Atlantic Spadefish	150,552	661,926	812,478	-
Bar Jack	13,228	49,021	62,249	-
Deepwater Complex	131,268	38,628	169,896	-
Misty Grouper	2,388	475	2,863	1.7%
Sand Tilefish	1,770	6,213	7,983	4.7%
Queen Snapper	8,756	710	9,466	5.6%
Blackfin Snapper	1,096	2,569	3,665	2.2%
Yellowedge Grouper	50,464	5,132	55,596	32.7%
Silk Snapper	66,794	23,529	90,323	53.2%
Other Jacks Complex	189,422	267,799	457,221	-
Banded Rudderfish	37,829	107,605	145,434	31.8%
Almaco Jack	147,322	155,195	302,517	66.2%
Lesser Amberjack	4,270	5,000	9,270	2.0%
Other Snappers Complex	344,575	1,169,308	1,513,883	-
Cubera Snapper	12,381	50,884	63,265	4.2%
Gray Snapper	302,180	944,852	1,247,132	82.4%
Lane Snapper	30,014	173,472	203,486	13.4%
Other Porgies Complex	36,348	106,914	143,262	-
Jolthead Porgy	1,571	36,315	37,886	26.4%
Knobbed Porgy	34,515	32,926	67,441	47.1%
Saucereye Porgy	0	3,606	3,606	2.5%
Scup	0	9,306	9,306	6.5%
Whitebone Porgy	262	24,762	25,024	17.5%
Grunts Complex	217,903	618,122	836,025	-
White Grunt	203,405	440,484	643,889	77.0%
Sailor's Choice	0	22,674	22,674	2.7%
Tomtate	0	92,670	92,670	11.1%
Margate	14,498	62,294	76,792	9.2%

* Species in each complex that are not being considered for further evaluation are shaded in gray and provided for context.

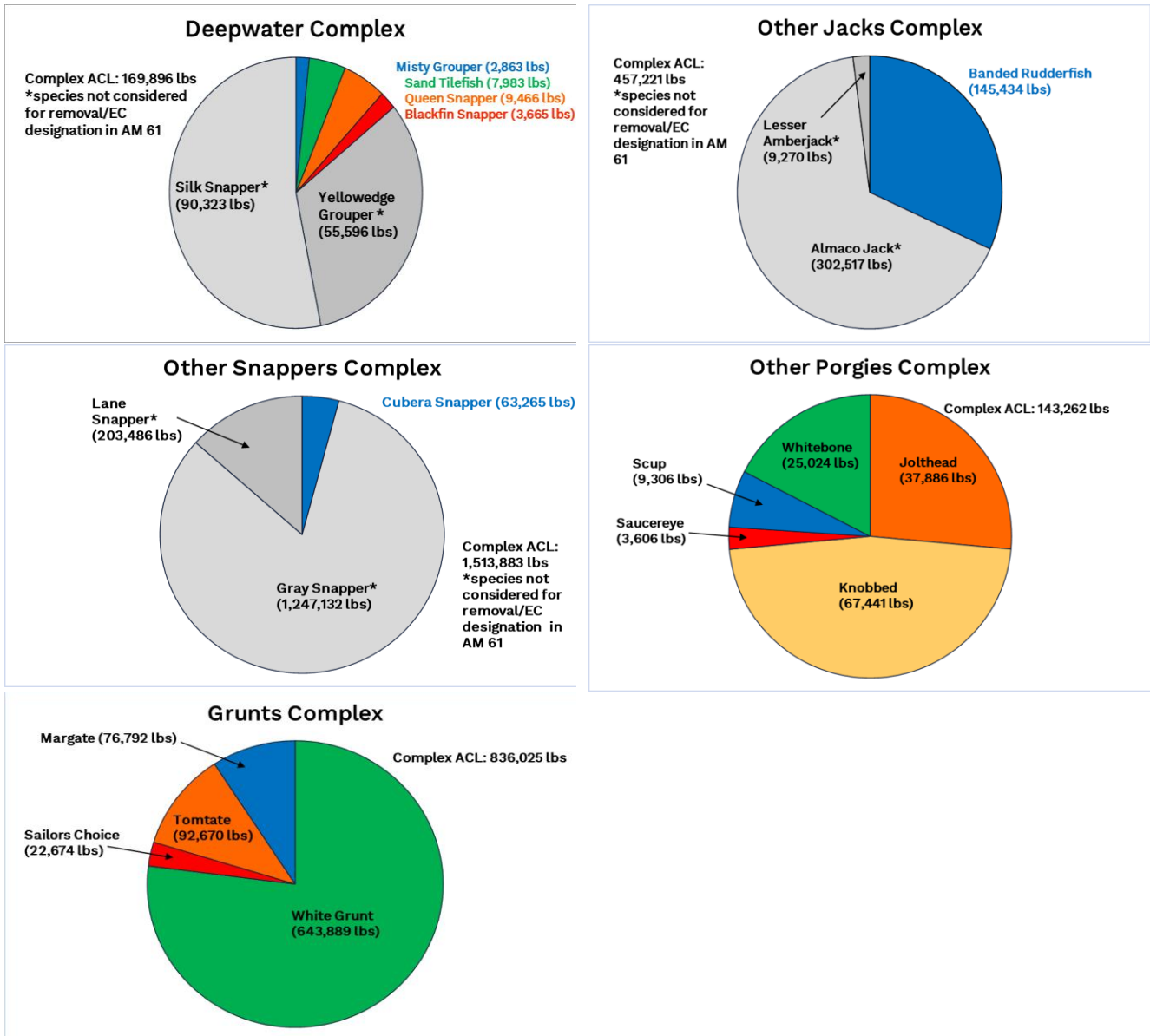


Figure 1. Complex ACLs for snapper grouper species requested by the Council for further evaluation of the need for federal conservation and management.

AP Feedback and Recommendations

At the October 2025 Snapper Grouper AP meeting, Council staff briefed the AP on the Council’s considered changes to the Snapper Grouper FMU via Amendment 61. The AP provided the following feedback captured in Table 2. Specific comments related to this table can be found in the [AP report](#).

Table 2. SG AP consensus initial recommendation for species considered in Amendment 61.

Species	1) Status quo (maintain federal management)	2) Remove from FMP all together	3) EC w/ no other measures	3a) EC + permit	3b) EC + reporting	No AP consensus at this time
Queen Snapper	X					
Cubera Snapper	X					
Jolthead Porgy	X					
Knobbed Porgy	X					
Saucereye Porgy	X					
Scup	X					
Whitebone Porgy	X					
Misty Grouper	X					
Blackfin Snapper	X					
Atlantic Spadefish				X	X	
Bar Jack				X	X	
Banded Rudderfish				X	X	
Sand Tilefish				X	X	
White Grunt				X	X	
Tomtate				X	X	
Sailor's Choice				X	X	
Margate				X	X	

At the January 2026 Law Enforcement AP meeting, the AP reviewed Amendment 61 and offered the following comments:

- General LE view: Enforcement would be primarily an implementation and management issue; officers expect to enforce whatever regulations are in place and identify species while on patrol. Primary operational concerns are clarity of regulations and outreach/education to reduce stakeholder confusion.
 - Need to be clear what is still federally managed and what has been removed from federal management all together.
 - For some states, federal management helps with consistency in regulations between state and federal waters. Try to avoid a mis-match in regulations between state and federal waters.
 - Education will be key.
- Support for EC designation: Several AP members favored retaining species as EC (or similar elevated monitoring status) rather than full removal because it would reduce administrative burden while preserving data collection and the ability to act in the future if needed.
 - Maintaining species in the federal FMP also keeps the species within the focus of federal law enforcement officers (NMFS, USCG, etc.). If state managed-only, may not be an enforcement priority for federal officers.
- Florida perspective: Preference for consistent regulations state-to-state to reduce angler confusion; Florida can extend state regulations into federal waters when species are unmanaged federally.
 - Noted that removal from federal management could incentivize targeting of these

species as “pathway species” used to qualify for a restricted species endorsement on the state saltwater products license (SPL) resulting in increased commercial pressure.

- North Carolina perspective: Concern about turning over management to states with different procedural processes and potential for quick proclamations with little public notice; also worry about insufficient enforcement presence beyond state waters.
- Recreational perspective: Do not want removal from federal management to be viewed as a “free for all” since some species being considered are important to the fishery and there should be efforts to avoid depletion.
- Reporting requirements: For EC designation, noted for-hire reporting (charter / headboat) could remain, private recreational reporting not required under current federal rules.
- Identification/aggregate limits: Examples from the Gulf and Florida where aggregate bag limits are used to address identification issues (e.g., rudderfish vs. amberjack) were noted.
- Consensus points: Law enforcement did not view removal as a major enforcement burden but emphasized the need for outreach, clarity of regulations, and coordination with states; there are some potential benefits from removing these species from their current management status but also concerns centered on management and conservation outcomes.

COMMITTEE ACTION

As part of the guidance offered at the September 2025 meeting, the Committee wanted to revisit the list of species being included in Amendment 61.

- Does the Committee wish to continue to consider all 17 species in Amendment 61?
- If not, which species should remain for consideration in the amendment?

Please note that the Committee is **not** yet being asked to determine whether a species should definitely be removed from the FMU or listed as an EC species, rather the question for the Committee is whether to continue to consider the species in this amendment. Table 3 is provided to aid the Committee in coming to a consensus.

Table 3. Species being considered in Amendment 61 (note: species are color coded if in a complex).

Complex	Species	Continue to consider in AM 61?	
NA	Atlantic Spadefish	Y	N
NA	Bar Jack	Y	N
Other Jacks Complex	Banded Rudderfish	Y	N
Other Snappers Complex	Cubera Snapper	Y	N
Deepwater Complex	Misty Grouper	Y	N
	Sand Tilefish	Y	N
	Queen Snapper	Y	N
	Blackfin Snapper	Y	N
Other Porgies Complex (entire complex)	Jolthead Porgy	Y	N
	Knobbed Porgy	Y	N
	Saucereye Porgy	Y	N
	Scup	Y	N
	Whitebone Porgy	Y	N
Grunts	White Grunt	Y	N

Complex (entire complex)	Sailor's Choice	Y	N
	Tomtate	Y	N
	Margate	Y	N

Measures to consider in Amendment 61

A summary of potential measures considered in Amendment 61 is provided in Table 4. The Council approved these measures for scoping in the fall 2025.

Table 4. Potential measures that could be taken for removing species from the Snapper Grouper FMU or listing as EC species in the Snapper Grouper FMP.

Potential Measures	Description	Comments
Alternative 1 (No Action)	Leave species in the FMU and within existing complexes.	Species will continue to have ACLs, AMs, and other measures where appropriate.
Alternative 2	Species would be removed from the FMU and federal management altogether.	States would be able to implement measures that extend into federal waters if there is interest. The ability, mechanism, and desire to manage species would vary by state.
Alternative 3. Designate species as EC species		
Sub-Alternative 3a <i>EC – no regs</i>	Do not implement or retain regulations.	The Council has 5 EC species in the Snapper Grouper FMP with no associated regulations.
Sub-Alternative 3b <i>EC + reporting req</i>	Retain reporting requirement for EC species on logbooks and dealer reports.	No changes needed to current reporting requirements.
Sub-Alternative 3c <i>EC + permit req</i>	Retain permit requirements for landing the species.	May need to add an option for a commercial permit that is not limited entry.
Sub-Alternative 3d <i>EC + agg. trip limit</i>	Implement an aggregate trip limit based on total amount or percentage of total trip landings.	Would need to specify possession limits by sector. Limits would likely need to be relatively unrestrictive since the species would no longer be in need of federal conservation and management.
Sub-Alternative 3e? Any additional EC parameters?	Under NS General Guidelines “ <i>management measures can be adopted in order to...address other ecosystem issues.</i> ” Are there “other ecosystem issues” that the Council would like to address by designating EC species? What measures could be established?	

COMMITTEE ACTION

- Does the Committee want to change any of the existing potential measures?
- Are there other measures that Committee would like the IPT to develop?

Next steps

- The IPT will meet to develop draft actions and alternatives based on the Council's guidance.
 - Will include measures discussed by the Council and other associated potential actions such as revising the ACLs for the remaining species in a complex (deepwater, other jacks, and the other snappers complex).

Appendix 1. Evaluation criteria

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) section 302(h)(1) requires that a council prepare a fishery management plan (FMP) for each fishery under its authority that requires conservation and management. Not every fishery requires federal management. Any stocks that are predominately caught in federal waters and are overfished or subject to overfishing, or likely to become overfished or subject to overfishing, are considered to require conservation and management (50 CFR § 600.305(c)(1)). Beyond such stocks, councils may determine that additional stocks require “conservation and management.” (see Magnuson-Stevens Act definition at 16 U.S.C. 1802(5)). Based on this definition, and other relevant provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, a council should consider the following non-exhaustive list of factors when deciding whether additional stocks require conservation and management:

- i. The stock is an important component of the marine environment.
- ii. The stock is caught by the fishery.
- iii. Whether an FMP can improve or maintain the condition of the stock.
- iv. The stock is a target of a fishery.
- v. The stock is important to commercial, recreational, or subsistence users.
- vi. The fishery is important to the Nation or to the regional economy.
- vii. The need to resolve competing interests and conflicts among user groups and whether an FMP can further that resolution.
- viii. The economic condition of a fishery and whether an FMP can produce more efficient utilization.
- ix. The needs of a developing fishery, and whether an FMP can foster orderly growth.
- x. The extent to which the fishery is already adequately managed by states, by state/federal programs, or by federal regulations pursuant to other FMPs or international commissions, or by industry self-regulation, consistent with the requirements of the MSA and other applicable law.

[50 CFR § 600.305\(c\)\(4\)](#): When considering removing a stock from, or continuing to include a stock in, an FMP, Councils should prepare a thorough analysis of factors in [paragraphs \(c\)\(1\)\(i\)](#) through [\(x\)](#) of this section, and any additional considerations that may be relevant to the particular stock. As mentioned in [paragraph \(c\)\(3\)](#) of this section, if the amount and/or type of catch that occurs in Federal waters is a significant contributing factor to the stock's status, such information would weigh heavily in favor of continuing to include a stock in an FMP. Councils should consider weighting the factors as follows. Factors in [paragraphs \(c\)\(1\)\(i\)](#) through [\(iii\)](#) of this section should be considered first, as they address maintaining a fishery resource and the marine environment. *See* [16 U.S.C. 1802\(5\)\(A\)](#). These factors weigh in favor of continuing to include a stock in an FMP. Councils should next consider factors in [paragraphs \(c\)\(1\)\(iv\)](#) through [\(ix\)](#) of this section, which set forth key economic, social, and other reasons contained within the MSA for an FMP action. *See* [16 U.S.C. 1802\(5\)\(B\)](#). Finally, a Council should consider the factor in [paragraph \(c\)\(1\)\(x\)](#) of this section before deciding to remove a stock from, or continue to include a stock in, an FMP. In many circumstances, adequate management of a fishery by states, state/Federal programs, or another Federal FMP would weigh in favor of removing a stock from an FMP. *See e.g.*, [16 U.S.C. 1851\(a\)\(7\)](#) and [1856\(a\)\(3\)](#).